

## **Three Project Pop-Up businesses to celebrate grand openings in Milton**

*WineKnot, P.C. Rods and Nest Spa & Boutique launched with the help of the state-run program*

**MILTON, Del.** (Dec. 16, 2014) – For the second straight year, a state program has sparked the launch of new businesses in downtown Milton, helping entrepreneurs move their enterprises into once-vacant brick-and-mortar locations.

Wine Knot Shop, P.C. Rods and Nest Spa & Boutique, participants in this year's Project Pop-Up program, will each mark their official grand opening with a trio of ceremonies on Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2014. The events, which will be attended by the business owners and local and state officials, begins at 2 p.m. at Wine Knot, which is located at 113 Union Street Unit F, Milton.

[Project Pop-Up](#), now in its third year, provides three months of rent-free commercial space during the holiday season along with the assistance of a business advisor to help launch and grow the business in its new location. The program has grown from three participating businesses in 2012 to 15 this year, including nine businesses in an incubator in Wilmington.

"The growth of Project Pop-Up shows that Delaware is a place where entrepreneurs, if given the chance, are able to take their ideas to the next level and succeed," said Alan Levin, Director of the Delaware Economic Development Office. "Small business is one of our greatest strengths, and this program is tapping into the roots of that sector by providing a very low-risk launching pad for these enterprising men and women."

Last year, two businesses signed long-term leases in Milton: 302 Fitness and Milton Wellness Center, and the program has enabled two businesses to launch in Milford this year alone, including the Delaware Branding Company and Patty Cakes, whose grand opening is set for Friday.

Amy and Patrick Conroy are the owners and operators of two Project Pop-Up businesses. Amy Conroy described the Wine Knot Shop as an "off-the-wall gift shop" that sells personalized furniture such as shelves and benches, custom wine bottle labels for any occasion, paintings, cork and bottle cap art and other personalized gifts. P.C. Rods, which is in an adjacent space at 113 Union Street, is a bait, tackle and rod repair shop.

The couple worked at Irish Eyes in Lewes for several years and always wanted to step out and run their own business.

Amy Conroy said Project Pop-Up was especially helpful in overcoming their fear of the unknown.

“The initial stages starting up can be the scariest. We would have never tried to do this without the assistance of the Pop-Up program,” Amy Conroy said. “The classes, seminars and networking provided by the Pop-Up program gave us the knowledge and guidance to start our small businesses. We are up and running and are very excited about our future.”

“Project Pop-Up is a must for anyone dreaming to own their own business,” Patrick Conroy said. “This program really brings life back into small towns.”

Diane Laird, State Coordinator for Downtown Delaware, said the Conroys bring wit and a creative spirit to downtown Milton.

“The downtown is quickly becoming a hub of activity for food, theater, and fun shopping opportunities,” Laird said.

Ken Anderson, Director of Entrepreneurial and Small Business Support for the Delaware Economic Development Office, was equally as optimistic about the Conroys’ chances for success.

“I have never met two people more excited about the opportunity to take their entrepreneurial pursuits to the next level, by acquiring their own brick-and-mortar location. If hard work, creativity and passion are critical elements for business success, then Patrick and Amy Conroy are certain to experience success in their new businesses in Milton,” Anderson said.

The third business taking part in this year’s Project Pop-Up is Nest Spa & Boutique, owned by Hillary Reid.

After hearing about Project Pop-Up, Reid decided to move her natural skin care business, then called Skin By Hillary, from a smaller shop in her native Milford to a larger property in Milton.

Moving the business, now known as Nest Spa, into its new home at 105 Federal Street has allowed Reid to expand her services to include spa, massage, nails and facials.

“Project Pop-Up has helped me get established. I would recommend it to someone who has a small business they want to expand or someone doing it out of their home or on the side,” Reid said. “If you’re scared and don’t have the finances to expand or get started, Project Pop-Up gives you that cushion of three months rent-free. Plus, the resources are there. If you need something, you can call.”

Anderson praised Reid for not only serving as a leader in her chosen industry, but for being a savvy business owner as well.

“Hillary’s persistence and willingness to take an already successful small business to the next level, by acquiring her own space, expanding her services and creating a beautiful, upscale environment for her clients, is a reflection of her faith and persistence that will serve her business and the town of Milton well for many years,” said Anderson, who worked with Reid extensively in the early months preparing for the opening.

#### **About the Delaware Economic Development Office**

The Delaware Economic Development Office is an executive state agency responsible for attracting new investors and businesses to the state, promoting the expansion of existing industry, assisting small and minority-owned businesses, promoting and developing tourism and creating new and improved employment opportunities for all citizens of the State. Visit [dedo.delaware.gov](http://dedo.delaware.gov).

#### **About Downtown Delaware**

Downtown Delaware, a program of the Delaware Economic Development Office, provides Delaware’s historic downtowns, communities, and small businesses with tools to revitalize their commercial districts, increase entrepreneurial opportunity, and enhance quality of place. To learn more about the Main Street program, visit [www.delawaremainstreet.com](http://www.delawaremainstreet.com).

#### **Contact:**

Peter Bothum

Delaware Economic Development Office

Office: 302-672-6857

Cell: 302-632-6665

[Peter.Bothum@state.de.us](mailto:Peter.Bothum@state.de.us)

###